Some evenings Jack, Gabriel, and Frederick (not Fred) ran to the office from the lounge, terrified by something they'd seen on T.V. Once it was an especially graphic news item, a variety store video of the proprietor getting robbed, beaten, and stabbed. Once it was a movie featuring delusional people who heard voices. Jack would be smoking. He'd say he was glad he wasn't like "that," a murderer or someone with delusions. He'd ask, "Why do people kill?" or "Why do people hear voices?" I'd say I didn't know, but smoking in the hallway was against "House Rules." He'd skulk off, taking the others along.

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One evening I caught Frederick (not Fred) sobbing in the dining room. He was sitting alone at one of the long white plastic tables that we cleaned with the bleach rag after every meal. There was always one in the bucket on top of the tenants' fridge.

The fridge wasn't used for much else. Many of the tenants didn't eat at meal times. Some of them hardly ate anything at all. I'd cook a roast, slice it on the machine in the kitchen, and serve it with vegetables, mashed potatoes and gravy. The tenants loved potatoes and gravy, but I'd open the fridge and find half a dozen plates of uneaten meat. Some of them couldn't eat it because of their rotten teeth. That was why